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RESEARCH ARTICLE

AWARENESS ON CONSEQUENCES OF AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS TOBACCO USE AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FROM SOMALIA STUDYING IN DHAKA BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

Background: Tobacco use is a global epidemic among young people. As with adults, it poses a serious health threat to youth and young adults in the United States and has significant implications for this nation's public and economic health in the future (Perry et al. 1994; Kessler 1995). In Somalia, there has been a rapid increase in the prevalence of smoking among the younger generation. Every effort needs to be made to stop the uptake of smoking among this category. Objectives: This study focused on Awareness on consequences of and attitude towards tobacco use Among University Students from Somalia, the study explored the students' level of awareness in relation to tobacco products and their attitudes towards smoking as well as their smoking habits. Methodology: A questionnaire based survey was carried out among 180 university students from Somalia in Dhaka city of Bangladesh. A cross sectional, descriptive study was carried out to investigate awareness on consequences of and attitude of tobacco use among Somali students studying in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Results: During the study, it was found that 81% respondents Smoked Cigarette, 59.4% were in the age range of 16-20,58.3% smoke due to peer influence,67.7% of the students did not heard or seen anti-tobacco campaign for the last 30 days, Most of students 72.2% did not discuss the dangers of smoking with their teachers, Among the students 48.3% believe that smoking cause cancer of the lung and esophagus, 92.0% of the students agreed that participating health programs related to danger of tobacco use will reduce smoking, In this study, generally it was found (80%) of the Somali students had some awareness on tobacco use, on the other hand It was found that (60%) of the Somali students had some attitude on tobacco use. Conclusion: This study concludes that smoking behavior is still present among male students. The study therefore recommends the need for concerted efforts from government, teachers and parents to educate and protect students from easy access to cigarettes and exposure to tobacco smoke.

KEYWORDS

Awareness, consequences, attitude, participation, tobacco use.

1. Introduction

Smoking is now increasing rapidly throughout the developing world and is one of the biggest threats to current and future world health. Cigarette smoking harms nearly every organ of the body, causes many diseases, and reduces the health of smokers. It is one of the leading causes of death and disability in both developing and developed countries (Center for Disease Control, 2015).

Additionally, smoking has been identified as the single most important cause of preventable morbidity and premature death. Although many of the adverse health effects of tobacco occur later in life, Smoking has health implications for young people and is associated with other high-risk behaviors among young people including abuse of other drugs, fighting and high-risk sexual behavior. Smoking is commonly seen nowadays to college students. Many studies have reported that tobacco smoking is rising in young adult between the ages of 18-24 years as they are legal targets of tobacco industry marketing and increased the prevalence of smoking among college students (Aslan, et al, 2014).

Each day, nearly 4800 adolescents smoke their first cigarette; of these, nearly 2000 will become regular smokers. Smoking-related health problems are a function of the duration or the years of smoking and intensity which deals with the number of cigarettes consume per day; most adult smokers began to smoke or were already addicted before the age of 18 years. While many adolescents want to quit smoking, only a small number of them succeed (Lamkin, 2013).

Worldwide, despite reductions in rates of tobacco use in recent years, smoking remains an important public health concern in most developing countries and regular smoking is usually established in early adulthood. Previous research conducted by Appau (2011) shows that factors including risk perception, peer behavior, and participation in other risky behaviors correlate significantly with college students' smoking.

In similar circumstances, cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, accounting for more than 480,000 deaths every year, or 1 of every 5 deaths. In 2014, nearly 17

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of every 100 U.S. adults aged 18 years or older (16.8%) currently smoked cigarettes. This means an estimated 40 million adults in the United States currently smoke cigarettes. An estimated 20.9% (or 45.1 million) of all U.S. adults were current cigarette smokers. Of them, 80.8% (or 36.5 million) smoked every day, and 19.2% (or 8.7 million) smoked some days. The prevalence of current cigarette smoking also varied substantially across population groups. For instance, current smoking was higher among men at 23.9% than women at 18.1% (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014).

Among racial and ethnic groups, Americans, Indians and Alaska natives had the highest prevalence of smokers at 32%, followed by non-Hispanic whites at 21.9%, and non-Hispanic blacks at 21.5%. Asians at 13.3% and Hispanics at 16.2% had the lowest rates (Xu, et al., 2015).

Tobacco use is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality globally. Tobacco's contribution to ill health is projected to rise if current smoking trends are not reduced across the world. Although much of the long-term effects of smoking are observed in adulthood, the majority of smokers initiate the habit of smoking as adolescents.

There is a growing body of literature on adolescent tobacco use. Much of the research on the estimate of the prevalence and associated factors of adolescent smoking has been driven by the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS); an initiative spearheaded by the United States' Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Canadian Public Health Association, and a group of authors who have been conducting secondary analysis of GYTS data. Traditional reporting of results from the GYTS has concentrated on ages 13 to 15 years, and estimates of prevalence and the general socio-environment that may be associated with teenage smoking.

Cigarette smoking is one of the public health problems which killed about 100 million people in the 20th century and supposed to kill about one billion people in the 21st century if the pattern of its consumption continues. Currently the prevalence of smoking is increasing at the global level and highly associated with increased rate of mortality and morbidity. It also results in reduction of quality of life, life expectance, low academic performance and increased costs on the smokers, increased risk of acquiring HIV/AIDS, mental problems, behavioral changes.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study determined the awareness on consequences of and Attitudes towards tobacco use among Somali university students in Dhaka city. The findings of the study served as the basis of finding public health awareness guideline which can be implemented to decrease incidence of smoking and prevent its complications.

Tobacco use is the single most avoidable cause of death in the world and the most important public health issue of our time (WHO 1, 2008). Developing countries, especially on the African continent, have since the last decade experienced a persistent increase in the prevalence of smoking, the most noticeable among the young generation (African Union, 2014).

Due to the addictive nature of nicotine, successful cessation of smoking among those who initiate its use is rare. It is estimated that out of six smokers who attempt to quit, five will fail (WHO 1, 2008). Hence, as more people take up the habit of smoking, very few of them manage to quit. The majority of those who initiate the habit become long term smokers. The consequences of a high prevalence of smoking among the present students population will manifest in the future adult population as increased morbidity and mortality rates, exerting more stain on the already stretched health system in the country.

Teenage smoking is a dangerous habit that can perpetuate throughout a person's lifetime and cause serious negative health effects. Roughly 89% of all adults who currently smoke in the United States started this habit prior to turning 19 years old (Lantz et al., 2000). Therefore, focusing intervention strategies on teens who smoke can help to cut off these health risks early on in life.

Smoking at the adolescent stage of life is a lot more common than one might think. From 1992 to 1997, the smoking rate in teenagers attending their last year of high school increased dramatically, from 17.2% to 24.6% (Hersch, 1998). Smoking at this age is extremely dangerous. Besides the commonly known risks associated with smoking, adolescent bodies are still developing internally, which can be harmed by this habit (Wiencke and Kelsey, 2002). Heightened growth of lung volume occurs between

puberty and young adulthood; therefore, there are unique negative effects on the health of one's lungs and their ultimate growth when adolescents smoke cigarettes (Wiencke and Kelsey, 2002). During the second half of the twentieth century, the focus of smoking behaviors in teenagers was always on prevention instead of cessation; however it is just as important to educate teens that have already decided to smoke on the risks of this dangerous behavior and proper cessation techniques (Mermelstein, 2003).

3. METHODOLOGY

The design of the study was cross sectional, descriptive study was carried out to investigate awareness on consequences of and attitude of tobacco use among Somali students studying in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Self study-administered questionnaire (N=150) and interview was taken the date by using semis-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared in English to ensure clarity.

4. RESULTS

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents					
Variables	Categories	Frequencies	Percentages%		
Gender respondents	Male	128	90		
	Female	22	10		
	Total	150	100		
Occupation of the respondents	Unemployed	90	53.6		
	Casual worker	10	15		
	Self- employed	37	27		
	Employed	6.5	2.2		
	Others	6.5	2.2		
	Total	150	100		

Table 1 shows majority of the respondents were male since they were 90% while 10% of the respondents were female. Occupation background were 52% Unemployed, 27% were self Employed, 15% were Casual worker, 2.2% were Employed and 2.2% were Others.

Table 2: awareness on consequence of tobacco use					
Variables	Categories	Frequencies	Percentage		
Have you ever smoked	Yes	125	80.6		
cigarette?	No	25	19.4		
	Total	150	100		
How old were you when you smoked your first	Less than 15 years	5	5.0		
cigarette?	16-20	85	58.4		
	21-25	45	28.0		
	Above 25	15	8.6		
	Total	150	100		
Why did you smoke your	Curiosity	10	8.3		
first cigarette?	Peer influence	90	58.3		
	Stress	45	27.8		
	Availability	5	5.6		
	Total	150	100		
If the prizes of cigarettes	Yes	120	73.0		
were to increase would	No	30	27.0		
you still smoke?	Total	150	100		
Have you ever discussed	yes	31	27.8		
about the dangers of	No	119	72.2		
smoking with your teachers?	Total	150	100		
Please tell me all the	Cancer	80	48.3		
diseases caused by smoking that you are aware of?	Asthma	30	16.7		
	Heart disease	40	35.0		
	Total	150	100		

Table 2: shows that 80.6% of the participant smoked cigarette while 19.4% did not smoke cigarette. Among the respondents 5.0% were in the age less than 15, 59.4% were in the age range of 16-20, 30.0% were in the age21-25, 10.6% were in the age above 26. 8.3% of the respondents smoke first cigarette due to Curiosity, 58.3% smoke due to peer influence, 27.8% smoke due to stress and 5.6% smoke first cigarette due to Availability. 77.8% of the respondents said there is days that they smoke more cigarette than others while 22.2% did not smoke. Most of students 72.2% did not discuss the dangers of smoking with their teachers while 27.8% discussed. Among the students 48.3% believe that smoking cause cancer, 35.0% of students believe smoking cause heart disease and 16.7% believe that smoking cause Asthma.

Table 3: Attitude towards tobacco use						
Variables	Categories	Frequencies	Percentage%			
Smoking makes a person look more attractive?	Agree	120	68.4			
	Disagree	20	24.3			
	Not sure	10	7.3			
	Total	150	100			
Smoking should be banned in all public places?	Agree	120	76			
	Disagree	20	19			
	Not sure	10	5			
	Total	150	100			
Do you think participating of health programs related to danger of tobacco use will reduce smoking?	Agree	130	92			
	Disagree	10	4			
	Not assure	10	4			
	Total	150	100			
To discourage students from smoking, cigarettes Should be sold in packets and not as single sticks.	Agree	123	84			
	Disagree	17	12			
	Not sure	10	4			
	Total	150	100			

Table 3: shows that 68.4% of the students agreed that smoking makes person more attractive, 24.3% disagree while 7.3 didn't know. 76.0% of the respondents agreed that smoking should be panned in all public palaces, 19.0% disagree while 5% didn't know.92.0% of the students agreed that participating health programs related to danger of tobacco use will reduce smoking,4.0% disagreed while 4.0% didn't know. 84.0% of the students agreed to discourage students from smoking should be sold in a packets and not in a single sticks, 12.0% disagree while 4% didn't know.

5. DISCUSSION

The study participants of this study were Somali students studying in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents were discussed below. Among the respondents 53% were in the age range of 21-25, 34% were in the age range of 16-20 10% were in the age range of above 26 and only 3% were in the range of less than 16.

In this study 90% students were male and 10% students were female. Most 75% students their background residency were urban and 25% were rural residence. The study showed that 47.8% students were from Allied Health Science, 32.8% were from Engineering, and 12.2% were from Business and Economics, 3.3% were from Humanities and Social Science, 3.9% from Sciences and Information Technology. The study illustrate that 46% of students' parents were both alive, 28% of students' parents were Mother alive, and 22% of students parent were father alive, and 4% of students parent were non alive. During study the students occupation background were 52% Unemployed, 27% were self Employed, 15% were Casual worker, 2.2% were employed and 2.2% were others. Most of the Students which were 80% receive pocket money While 20% didn't receive pocket money.

Research finding showed there was a significant relation between awareness on consequences and attitude towards tobacco use. This showed that the infusion of the awareness on consequences and attitude of were important in changing the student's behavior towards tobacco use. In addition to that research finds that there is less awareness of tobacco use towards tobacco use for the students.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study has found that smoking behavior is still rife among Somali students in Dhaka Bangladesh. According to the findings of this study, the prevalence of smoking is still high among University students, with minimal ceasing rates. It is also evident that the level of Awareness is low among students, therefore smoking behavior can be a consequent of teenagers having made un-informed decisions regarding uptake of smoking habit very early in their lives.

In this study, generally it was found (80%) of the Somali students had some awareness on tobacco use. For estimating the level of Students awareness, in this study was divided into four levels, Excellence awareness, Good awareness, satisfactory awareness and poor awareness the result of this study showed that

Majority (40%) of the respondents had good awareness of consequence in tobacco use. Also the study relieved that (32%) of the respondents had satisfactory awareness of consequence in tobacco use, (19%) had poor awareness of consequence in tobacco use and only(9%) had excellent awareness of consequence in tobacco use

It was found that (60%) of the Somali students had some attitude on tobacco use. For estimating the level of Student's attitude on tobacco use in this study it was divided into two Positive attitude and Negative attitude the result of this study showed that Majority (62%) of the respondents had positive attitude towards tobacco use.

RECOMMENDATION

- Sensitization on the dangers of tobacco should be continuously carried out by parents, teachers as well as through the mass media in order to increase level of awareness among student regarding the dangers of smoking.
- The government should increase the levies taxed on cigarettes and other tobacco products to ensure that they significantly increase in price and are not easily affordable to students.
- University Students should have regular guidance and counseling talks that will encourage students to keep away from experimenting with tobacco products and also to encourage students who smoke to cease the behavior.

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